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A survey was made by Texas Technological College of secondary school teacher education programs in the United States to determine the various checkpoints and screening procedures of teacher candidates enrolled in those programs. A 13-item questionnaire designed to elicit these data was responded to by 43 institutions in 32 states, and responses were analyzed for each question. Recommendations for more effective checkpoints and screening procedures (such as early identification of teacher candidates; periodic reports on each student's background, grade point average, and vocational aspiration; and a newsletter for teacher candidates to improve communication) were derived from the data. (A seven-item bibliography is included.) (SM)

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SCREENING POINTS IN SECONDARY TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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Working with young people in college is one of the privileges of the college professor; but this privilege becomes painful when, in the last semester of college, it becomes necessary to recommend that a student who aspired to teach change to another vocational area. Obviously a series of checkpoints needs to be scattered through the teacher preparation program so that the student without potential to teach can be identified early and can be given special, remedial training or guided into another area for which he is better suited. The determination of reliable criteria to comprise such screening points was the objective of this study made recently at Texas Technological College. It investigated successful practices of other universities that were noted for their teacher preparation programs, and coupled with sound practices gleaned from a search of the literature regarding the problem, recommended a group of guidelines and checkpoints for a teacher preparation program.

A typical sequence of screening steps in a four-year pre-service program was identified by McClure.(5) These screening points for the student consisted of (1) admission to the institution, (2) formal admission to professional education, (3) admission to student teaching, (4) approval for graduation, and (5) certification. In addition, he discovered that academic average and some relatively subjective decision-making comprised the screening process in the conventional program of teacher training. In reality screening should become ". . . a matter of continuous evaluation of <u>performance</u>" based partially, at least, on behavioral skills; however, since most existing programs defer any demand for performance until the senior year, little opportunity

is found for objective screening early in the student's program. As a result of this problem in timing, a second look at the sequence of courses and of the experiences afforded in each course was needed.

A study of the student teaching programs in thirty-eight midwest institutions in 1957 by Inlow (3) indicated many and varied approaches to the problem of screening applicants. All the institutions reported the use of the academic record. Other methods which were reported as a part of the routine procedures in the screening process included the student-teaching interview, the physical examination, a speech test, use of standardized instruments, the autobiography, written faculty references, written character references, and psychiatric examinations. The type of institution was not significantly related to the methods which were employed for screening.

Nunney et al.(6) in a study of 91 institutions in the western states found a considerable variation among the institutions regarding practices and policies in selecting students for the teacher education programs. Achievement tests were used by 48 institutions, although 41 institutions reported that students with a "C" average were considered eligible for admission to the teacher education program.

Recommendations by Lofthouse (4) included the formal admission of students to the teacher education program no earlier than the end of the sophomore year. Cumulative evidence for the screening process should include sources such as speech and hearing records, samples of examinations and term papers, academic record to date, health certificate, recommendations

of the major professor, written faculty observations of personality and behavior, and a compiled report of the student's potentialities by at least one professor.

A survey by Farr (2) concerned the administration and the utilization of tests in teacher education programs at 443 institutions. A variety of tests and locally oriented experimental efforts were noted, but promising developments were few in number.

Durflinger (1), in a review of literature concerning recruitment and selection procedures for teacher preparation programs, concluded that ". . . research efforts must rely upon previous investigations in the measurement and prediction of teacher effectiveness or must make some unique contribution to knowledge in this area." Criticized were the lack of replication of investigations, seemingly diverse test batteries and populations, and the lack of general direction of the findings. Large cooperative studies were recommended.

A self-study by the School of Education, Texas Technological College,(7) utilized a sample survey of 326 students in the Teacher Education Program at the University. The survey indicated that 60 per cent of the females and 30 per cent of the males decided on a career in teaching while still in high school. At the same time, the Teacher Education Advisement Program has not been entirely successful for the freshmen and sophomores who are enrolled in other schools at the University. Recommendations for improvement included special attention to pre-enrollment programs, staff development programs emphasizing advisor training, frequent use of small group techniques, multiple approaches to facilitate early and frequent opportunities for pre-student teaching activities closer to the school setting, and encouragement of participation of freshmen and sophomores in professional organizations.

Procedure

Questionnaires were mailed to 74 senior institutions engaged in the education of secondary teachers in 46 states and Puerto Rico. Questionnaires were returned by individuals who represented 43 institutions in 32 states.

The questionnaire was designed to elicit responses to 13 questions which would provide data concerning screening procedures and checkpoints in teacher education. Treatment of the data involved frequencies for each response item.

Analysis of the Data

The analysis of the data is presented in the order of the thirteen questions from the questionnaire:

1. At what point in the student's program should the screening process begin? Of the 42 respondents answering this item, the sophomore year was chosen by 15 or 28 per cent as the beginning point in the student's screening process. Following in rank order were (1) at admission to college and (2) during the freshman year. Dual answers as provided by three of the respondents indicated at admission or the sophomore year.

Item	No. of Responses (N = 42)
Sophomore year	15
Admission to college	10
Freshman year	6
Pre-entry to education courses	4
Early as possible	3
First contact with school of education	2
Admission to teacher education	2
First education course	1
Declaration of major	1

2. At what part of the student's program should other checkpoints be placed? Other checkpoints were indicated in rank order as (1) prior to student teaching, (2) at time of field experiences, and (3) a continuous process. Responses to this question ranged from one to four checkpoints per respondent. The 43 respondents noted 17 different checkpoints.

Item	No. of Responses
Prior to student teaching	18
At time of field experiences	9
A continuous process	7
End of fourth semester	5
End of fifth semester	5
Entry into professional courses	5
During professional courses	5
Prior to certification	5
At end of each semester after entry into professional education courses	4
Major field	4
Each faculty member	4
Follow-up after 1-2 years in field	3
Upon completion of introductory education course	3
Annually	2
Dean of Students	2
End of second semester	1
End of sixth semester	1

3. What physical defects would you consider sufficiently serious to warrant removal from the program? Hindrance to classroom functions was named by 22 respondents to this item. Speech, sight, hearing, and emotional

defects were the most frequently named. No defects were deemed sufficiently serious to warrant removal from the program by eight of the respondents. The number of items ranged from ont to four per respondent.

Item	No. of Responses (N = 43)
Hindrance to classroom functions	22
Speech	11
Sight	9
None	8
Hearing	6
Emotional	4
Only very serious	1
Modes of determination:	
Consider individually	6
Speech and hearing test	3
Medical report from the health center	2
According to state laws	1
Physical examination required	1

4. What standardized tests could you recommend as valid instruments for measuring attitudes for prospective teachers? None was the answer given to this question by 33 of the 41 respondents. Answers were qualified by two of the negative respondents with the possible use of the Omnibus Personality Inventory and the Allport-Vernon Scale of Values. The MMPI and MTAI were the most frequently mentioned of the ten tests that were noted. The use of any tests was questioned by one respondent. Many replied that location of a suitable test was the greatest deterrent to a successful program for their scool.

Item	No. of Responses (N = 41)
None	33
MMPI - Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory	4
MTAI - Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory	3
MTAI - (for research only)	2
OPI - Omnibus Personality Inventory	1
Bowers - Teacher Attitude Inventory	1
OAIS - Opinion, Attitude, and Inventory Survey	1
Edwards' Personal Preference	1
English Teachers' Exam	1
Rorschach	1
Allport-Vernon Scale of Values	1
Question the use of tests	1

5. Do you feel writing samples should be used to determine a student's ability to communicate in a logical, literate manner? An answer of Yes was given by 27 of the 43 respondents while an answer of No was indicated by 15 of the respondents. The use of academic courses was noted by seven of the respondents.

Item	No. of Responses (N = 43)
Yes	27
No	15
Maybe - possibly of help	1
Use academic courses for this purpose	7
Use English proficiency test	1

6. Have you discovered another technique of measuring ability in communicating that is superior to a writing sample? A majority of the 43 respondents indicated a negative answer to this question. Of the 19 positive responses, a total of 8 respondents indicated an oral sample as superior. The 19 respondents denoted 8 techniques as superior to a writing sample.

Item	No. of Responses (N = 43)
No	24
Yes	19
Oral sample	8
Observation in everyday classes	3
Personal interviews	2
Standardized tests	2
Utilize English Department	1
Taping and Television	1
Use introduction to teaching course to screen and follow-up	1
Open-ended student biography	1

7. Who makes a judgment regarding the student's writing ability? The English Department was named by 13 of the 37 respondents. Instructors of various courses, a committee, and a combination from the English and Education Departments were denoted by 38 per cent of the respondents. Of 43 respondents to the questionnaire, 6 failed to respond to this item. A total of nine areas was named by the respondents to judge the student's writing ability.

Item	No. of Responses (N=37)
English Department	13
Instructors of various courses	7
Committee	4
English and Education Departments	3
Academic advisor	3
Director of student teaching	2
None	2
Proficiency exam	2
Admission officials	1
Education faculty	1

8. When in the student's program would this writing requirement be made? A total of 11 nonresponses to this item reduced the number of usable responses to 32. The sophomore year was named by 11 of the respondents or 34.4 per cent. The freshman year and prior to student teaching accounted for another 10 of the responses. One respondent recommended the freshman and sophomore years. A total of eight periods was named by the respondents as to when writing requirements should be made.

Item	No. of Responses (N=32)
Sophomore year	11
Freshman year	6
Prior to student teaching	14
Pre-admission to education	3
Junior year	3
Continuous - all levels	2
Early - allow for remedial work	2
None	1
First education courses	1

9. What techniques do you use for judging a student's ability to communicate orally in an effective manner? The use of a speech test and/or a speech course were the two most frequently named techniques. Interviews and observations in classes were the next most frequently named techniques. The 41 respondents identified 9 techniques. The number per respondent ranged from one to two. Several were interested in exploring the use of video-tape.

Item	No. of Responses (N=41)
Speech test	15
Speech course	10
Interviews	9
Observation in classes	8
Speech Department	2
Student teaching	2
TV - taped teaching	1
English Department	1
First course in education	1
None	1

10. Should recommendations from the student's major department be required? If so, after how many semester hours? Of 41 respondents, 33 replied Yes and 4 replied No. The end of the sophomore year was named by 7 of the positive respondents, or 21.2 per cent, in answer to the specified number of semester hours. Prior to student teaching was named by six of the respondents. A dual requirement was indicated by one respondent - prior to student teaching and prior to professional courses. Several respondents qualified their answers by saying that their schools were so large that it would be impossible for teachers of large classes to make such recommendations after only one class.

Item	No. of Responses (N=41)
Yes	33
No	4
End of sophomore year	7
Prior to student teaching	6
Upper division begun	5
Prior to professional courses	4
Use G.P.A. after 12 hours	4
Use G.P.A. after 18 hours	3
Use G.P.A. after 26 hours	1

11. Have you found that some of these functions can be performed adequately by the student's education faculty advisor or academic field advisor? Which ones? In answer to these questions, 33 responded Yes and 6 responded No. Inadequate responses to the second question precluded any interpretation of the data.

Item	No. of Responses (N=39)
Yes	33
No	6

12. Have you established a successful program to keep in touch with students during the time between their college entrance and their entrance into professional education courses? If so, what is its nature? Of 39 responses to the question, 27 were No and 8 were Yes. From the eight positive responses six techniques or programs were indicated. A response of None was indicated by two of the respondents.

Item	No. of Responses (N=35)
No	27
Yes	8
Nature of programs:	
Advisor's offices	2
Advisors assigned at time of registration	2
Professional organizations such as S. E. A.	2
Continuous contact with the student	1
Tutorial and Clinic Program	1
Space education courses over freshman, sophomore, and junior years	1

13. What other devices, such as grade point average or personality analysis, have you found to be successful? The grade point average was indicated by 31 of the 39 respondents. In addition, four other devices were named: (1) education instructors' evaluations, (2) personality analysis, (3) required interviews, and (4) a self-evaluation sheet. The number of devices that were indicated by the respondents ranged from one to three. An answer of None was given by four of the respondents.

Item	No. of Responses (N=39)
Grade point average	31
Education instructors' evaluations	5
Personality analysis	5
None	4
Few - limited	3
Required interviews	2
Self-evaluation sheet	1

Summary

The sophomore year was favored as the beginning point in the student's screening process. Other checkpoints included (1) prior to student teaching, (2) at time of field experiences, and (3) a continuous process. However, a definite void exists between the time a student enters college and the subsequent entrance into professional education courses as noted by 27 of the respondents. The grade point average was the major device for contact according to 31 of the respondents.

Speech, sight, hearing, and emotional defects were the most frequently mentioned physical defects for consideration. Individual consideration in terms of hindrance to classroom functions was the basic criterion for the removal of a student from teacher education.

Although ten tests were denoted by respondents, thirty-three of the institutions did not use standardized tests for measuring attitudes of prospective teachers. Interest was expressed by the respondents in the location of a suitable instrument.

A writing sample to measure the student's ability to communicate was required according to 27 respondents. The English Department and the sophomore year were most frequently mentioned in connection with the writing requirement.

An oral sample was considered superior in measuring the student's ability to communicate by eight of the respondents. Also, seven other techniques were identified as being superior to the written sample.

The use of a speech test and/or a speech course constituted the major techniques for judging a student's ability to communicate orally. The respondents identified a total of nine specific techniques for this purpose.

Specific recommendations from the student's major department should be required according to 33 of the respondents. The respondents identified seven different times when the requirement should be met with the end of the sophomore year the most frequently mentioned.

Recommendations

In view of the data gathered, the following recommendations would seem valid:

1. Identify as soon as possible all the students in the college who have indicated secondary education as a vocational choice.

2. Develop through data processing facilities a periodic print-out of the student's basic background information which would include the academic record such as the semester and over-all GPA. Included would be a complete record of all vocational choices that have been indicated by the student from the date of admission to the college. One copy should be retained in the student's permanent file in the office of the dean, and one copy should be forwarded to the student's advisor.

3. Since a major problem is communication and contact with the student from the time he enters college until his sophomore or junior year, implement a periodic newsletter and other materials of interest that would be sent to each student who has indicated a vocational choice of secondary education. This newsletter could also be sent to high school seniors who had applied for admission to the college and who had indicated secondary education as a vocational choice.

4. Record via video-tape as early as possible a brief experience by the student. This experience could be evaluated for speech, dress, appearance, etc., and the record could serve as a comparative device when utilized at

specific intervals. Too, the device would serve as an excellent self-evaluation technique for each student.

5. Implement on a trial basis a standardized test for measuring attitudes for prospective teachers. Provide for continuing research in this area of concern.

6. Determine where interviews and written work best fit into the university's proglam of screening.

7. Actively promote early membership in professional organizations for all present and prospective students in secondary education from the time they enter the university.

8. Thoroughly explore by means of follow-up techniques the students who enter the university with a vocational choice of secondary education but who changed to another field of interest. A study of the reasons of change would be done on a continuing basis.

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